

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Annual Appropriations Act** - An action of a legislative body that makes funds available for expenditure with specific limitations as to amount, purpose, and duration. In most cases, it permits money previously authorized to be obligated and payments made, but for the highway program operating under contract authority, the appropriations act specifies amounts of funds that Congress will make available for the fiscal year, to liquidate obligations.

**August Redistribution** - The redistribution, in August of each year, of the obligation limitation from those states or programs unable to obligate their shares of the limitation to states or programs that are able to obligate more than their initial shares of the limitation.

**Caltrans (CT)** - California Department of Transportation

**Deobligation** - A rescission of the commitment where the federal government promises to pay the recipient for the federal share of a project's eligible cost.

**DLAE** - District Local Assistance Engineer

**Earmark** - A project and funding specifically defined in legislation.

**FHWA** - Federal Highway Administration

**FSTIP** - Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

**FTA** - Federal Transit Authority

**FTIP** - Federal Transportation Improvement Program

**Grant** - Funds that are granted to a project on a competitive basis at the discretion of the Transportation Secretary.

**Inactive Project** - A project that has a lapse of more than one year between invoices. Subject to FHWA deobligation of federal funds in compliance with the FHWA Final Rule on Inactive Projects.

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**ISTEA** - Intermodal Surface Transportation Equity Act - A multi-year transportation act covering Federal Fiscal Years 1992/93 through 1997/98.

**Lead Agency** - The agency responsible for the implementation of a project's preliminary engineering (PE), Right-of-Way (R/W) and/or construction.

**Master Agreement** - An agreement where the agency agrees to comply with federal and state laws, regulations and policies.

**MPO/RTPA** - Metropolitan Planning Organization/Regional Transportation Planning Agency

**Obligation** - A commitment where the federal government promises to pay the recipient for the federal share of a project's eligible cost.

**Obligation Limitation** - Acts as a ceiling on the sum of all obligations that can be made within a specified time period, usually a fiscal year.

**Obligational Authority** - The total amount of funds that may be obligated in a year. For the Federal-Aid Highway Program, this is comprised of the *obligation limitation* amount plus amounts for programs exempt from the limitation.

**Project Sponsor** - The agency or special interest group that requests an earmark through a Congressman.

**SAFETEA-LU** - The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users - A multi-year transportation act covering Federal Fiscal Years 2004/05 through 2008/09.

**TEA-21** - Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century - A multi-year transportation act covering Federal Fiscal Years 1998/99 through 2002/03.

**Transportation Act/Authorization Act** - A statutory provision that establishes or continues a federal agency, activity, or program, for a fixed or indefinite period of time.

**U.S.C.** - United States Code